MARVEL
9
30 YEARS
V · MANNA · ARCINIEGA
CARNAGE

YEARS AGO, THE **VENOM SYMBIOTE** SPAWNED, AND ITS OFFSPRING BONDED TO SERIAL KILLER **CLETUS KASADY**. IMBUED WITH INCREDIBLE STRENGTH, SPEED, ENDURANCE AND POWERS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**, KASADY AND HIS EXTRATERRESTRIAL "OTHER" SHARE A UNIQUE BOND AND HAVE LONG TERRORIZED THE MARVEL UNIVERSE AS...

CARNAGE

CARNAGE IS LOOSE. REJECTED BY ITS FORMER HOST **CLETUS KASADY**, THE CARNAGE SYMBIOTE IS ON ITS OWN, BUT IT HAS FOUND A DISCIPLE IN SERIAL KILLER **KENNETH NEELY**. AND THE MURDEROUS SYMBIOTE IS EVOLVING.

AFTER ATTACKING AND STEALING THE POWERS OF SUPER-POWERED INDIVIDUALS, CARNAGE TRAVELED TO NIFFLEHEIM TO HUNT DOWN HIS NEXT VICTIM, **MALEKITH**, AND EXTRACT HIS SYMBIOTE CODEX.

BUT DETECTIVE **JONATHAN SHAYDE**, WHO HAS BEEN AIDED BY THE VOICE OF CLETUS KASADY IN HIS HEAD, FOLLOWED CARNAGE TO HEL TO TRY TO STOP THE MADNESS ONCE AND FOR ALL.

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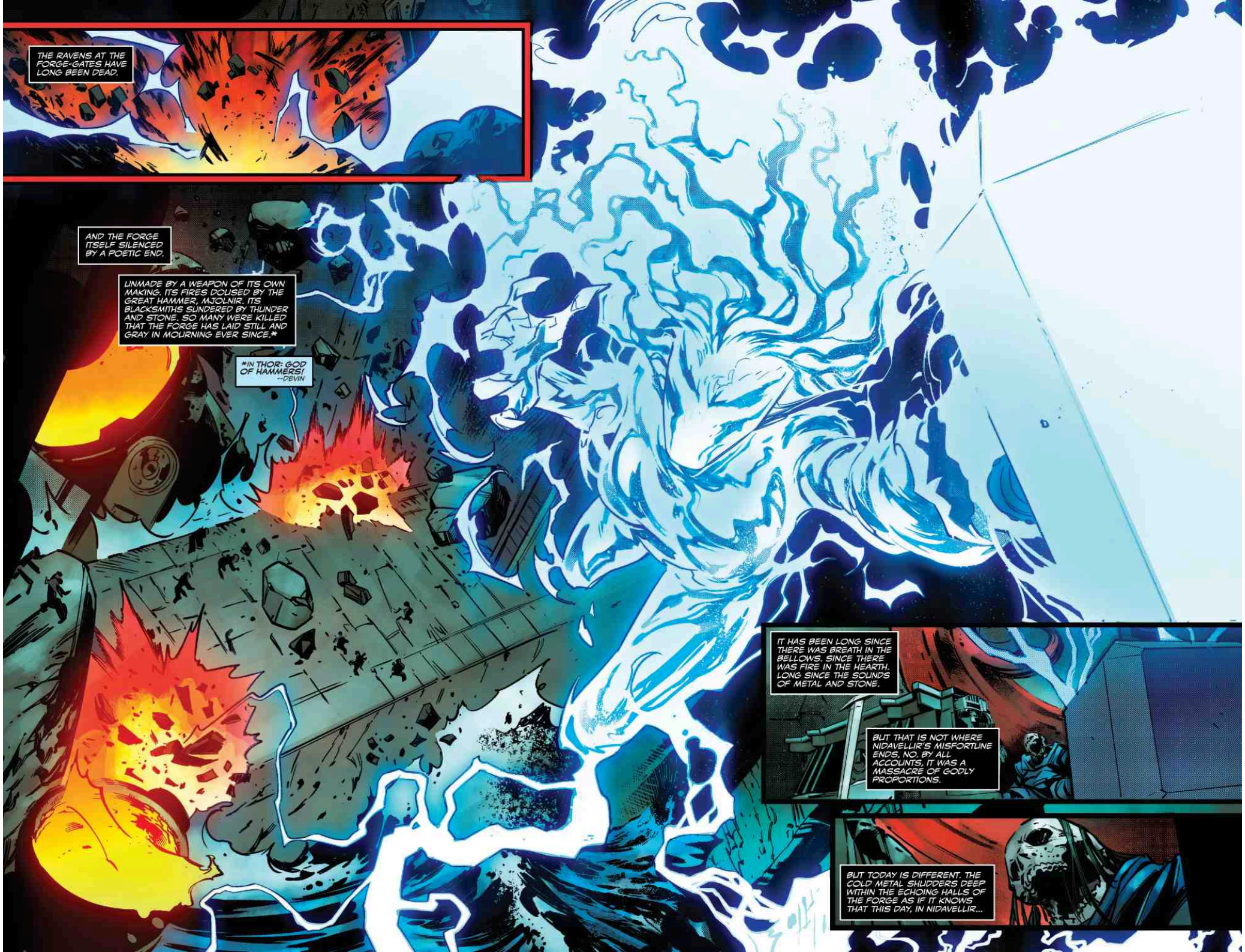
NIDAVELLIR OF THE TEN REALMS.
THEN.
THE FORGE OF GODS, WHERE EITRI'S DWARVES ONCE TEMPERED THE HEARTS OF STARS AND BEAT LIVING TEMPESTS INTO MALLETS OF ELDERSTONE AND GARNWOOD.
THE FORGE FED THE INCESSANT STRIFE OF THE TEN REALMS. THOSE WHO HELD ITS WEAPONS AND ARMORS WERE ASSURED VICTORY. WITH GREAT FONDNESS, EITRI CALLED HIS PERSONAL FORGE THE GODMAKER.
ITS BELLOWS STOKED SUCH FIRES THAT WAYFARERS TREADING UPON NIDAVELLIR'S SURFACE MISTOOK THE VENTS FOR VOLCANOES.
BUT NO MORE... NO LONGER.


THE RAVENS AT THE FORGE-GATES HAVE LONG BEEN DEAD.
AND THE FORGE ITSELF SILENCED BY A POETIC END.
UNMADE BY A WEAPON OF ITS OWN MAKING. ITS FIRES DOUSED BY THE GREAT HAMMER, MJOLNIR. ITS BLACKSMITHS SUNDERED BY THUNDER AND STONE. SO MANY WERE KILLED THAT THE FORGE HAS LAID STILL AND GRAY IN MOURNING EVER SINCE.*
*IN THOR: GOD OF HAMMERS! --DEVIN
IT HAS BEEN LONG SINCE THERE WAS BREATH IN THE BELLOWS. SINCE THERE WAS FIRE IN THE HEARTH. LONG SINCE THE SOUNDS OF METAL AND STONE.
BUT THAT IS NOT WHERE NIDAVELLIR'S MISFORTUNE ENDS, NO. BY ALL ACCOUNTS, IT WAS A MASSACRE OF GODLY PROPORTIONS.
BUT TODAY IS DIFFERENT. THE COLD METAL SHUDDERS DEEP WITHIN THE ECHOING HALLS OF THE FORGE AS IF IT KNOWS THAT THIS DAY, IN NIDAVELLIR...

...THERE WILL BE CARNAGE.
NOW.
I LOVE PRISONS, DON'T YOU, KENNETH? ALL THESE DWARVES AND US IN A PLACE WITHOUT ESCAPE!
CARNAGE
GODMAKER

I THINK...I AM BEYOND WONDERING WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE.
THERE ARE OTHER WORLDS. THERE ARE ELVES. THERE ARE DWARVES.
THERE IS A HEL, AND THERE ARE GODS. AND WE ARE SLAUGHTERING THEM ALL.

YOU MAKE ME SOUND LIKE A FOOL, KENNETH.
LIKE SOME DEGENERATE TITILLATED BY THE VIOLENCE, THE BLOOD AND GORE OF IT ALL.

WORST OF ALL, YOU MAKE ME SOUND DIRECTIONLESS.
WHEN THE TRUTH IS THAT YOU ARE TOO SMALL TO SEE THE GRANDEUR OF THIS PLAN.

AND HERE I WAS THINKING WE WERE BEGINNING TO EXPAND YOUR MIND.
THAT YOU WERE GROWING CLOSER TO BEING MY HOST.

GRRRRRRRR
AH, IT SEEMS WE HAVE ARRIVED AT OUR DESTINATION.

BEYOND THIS DOOR, THANKS TO HELA'S KINDNESS, LIES THE KEY TO MY ASCENSION.
YOU THINK WE ARE HERE WITHOUT REASON OR DIRECTION?

WE ARE HERE, MY PUP, TO STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT.
BEFORE YOU BOTHER WITH EXPLANATIONS AND CONCESSIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS AND THREATS, KNOW THIS.
WHATEVER IT IS THAT YOU WANT... THE ANSWER IS NO.

I WANT TO USE THE FORGE.
no.
TO MAKE A FEARSOME WEAPON.
no.
THE LIKES OF WHICH ALL OF EXISTENCE HAS NEVER SEEN BEFORE.
no.

NO?
YOU MUST BE HARD OF HEARING.

NOW, IF YOU WILL PLEASE CLOSE THE DOOR ON YOUR WAY OUT. TRY NOT TO KILL ANYONE ELSE.

H-HELA SAID...THAT YOU M-MIGHT BE WILLING TO HELP US IN RETURN FOR YOUR FREEDOM?
ONCE WE HAVE WHAT WE WANT, WE WILL SET YOU FREE... YOU CAN BE--

SHE IS A PERSISTENT &%$#...I WILL CONCEDE.
BUT YOU THINK YOU'RE THE FIRST SHE HAS SENT HERE?

DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHO I AM?

I AM DRORIN RUNEHEWER. SON OF BODRI AND DUNA. BROTHER TO EITRI FORGEMASTER.
EITRI, THE KING OF THE DWARVES, MY DEAR SIBLING--UPON WHOSE WORD I WAS IMPRISONED HERE FOR SPEAKING THE TRUTH THAT HE WAS TOO MUCH OF A COWARD TO FACE.
THE TRUTH?
THAT THE FORGE NEEDED TO BE DESTROYED. ITS FIRES QUELLED AND ITS HAMMERS AND ANVILS MOLTEN DOWN TO FAR MORE USEFUL THINGS.
"FOR TOO LONG, THE GODS HAD USED OUR FORGE AND OUR SKILL TO MAKE THEIR TOYS.
"INSTRUMENTS OF SUCH POWER AND BEAUTY USED LIKE PLAYTHINGS IN THE PURSUIT OF PETTY AMBITIONS OR AS IMPLEMENTS OF INSIGNIFICANT SQUABBLES. GRANDIOSE FIGURINES MASHING AGAINST EACH OTHER IN ENDLESS AND POINTLESS CONFLICT.
"I WAS NOT SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT IT WAS ONE OF OUR WEAPONS THAT DESTROYED THE FORGE IN THE END. THAT IT WAS ONE OF OURS THAT ENDED EITRI'S LIFE."
I WAS ALWAYS A MORE TALENTED CRAFTSMAN THAN MY BROTHER. HE SHOULD'VE LISTENED.
BUT HE WAS THE BETTER MERCHANT AND COULDN'T SAY NO TO THE NEXT PROPOSITION.
SO, I HELD THEN THAT THE FORGE MUST BE DESTROYED.
WHY THE HEL WOULD I HELP YOU NOW?

HMMM... I LIKE YOU DRORIN, SON OF BODRI.
I TEND TO HAVE A SOFT SPOT FOR PEOPLE WILLING TO DIE FOR THEIR CONVICTIONS.
ALL THESE YEARS, YOU'VE HAD THIRSTY LITTLE WARMONGERS BREAK DOWN YOUR DOOR IN PURSUIT OF SILLY THINGS, I UNDERSTAND.
YOU MISTAKE ME FOR ONE OF THEM. ONE OF YOUR...GODS.
BUT MY AMBITIONS, LIKE YOURS, ARE THOSE OF A CRAFTSMAN. I'M NOT HERE TO PARTAKE IN PETTY SQUABBLES.
I AM HERE TO KILL THEM ALL. AND WHEN THERE ARE NONE LEFT...TO KILL SOME MORE.
YOU WANT A REASON TO HELP ME?
I WANT YOU TO MAKE ME A WEAPON. THE GREATEST BLADE WHOSE SINGULAR PURPOSE IS...
...CARNAGE.
TELL ME, DRORIN RUNEHEWER... WHAT GREATER AMBITION EXISTS FOR A WEAPON THAN TO KILL?
=SIGH= THE FORGE WILL NEED MATERIALS, AND I WILL NEED AN ASSISTANT.

HRVELGEMIR.
THE GREAT WELL.
YOU SEE, JON SHAYDE? THIS IS THE PART NO ONE TELLS YOU. THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF ENTITIES IN THIS WORLD AND OURS WITH ALL KINDS OF POWERS.
AND THEY ALL JUST DRONE ON AND ON ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY AND PRUDENCE AND ALL THAT CRAP.
BUT NO ONE EVER TELLS YOU HOW HARD IT IS TO TAKE THAT FIRST STEP. TO SIMPLY HAVE THE WILL TO ACT.
NOW, I'VE NEVER HAD THAT PROBLEM, AND I KNOW I'M NOT THE BEST EXAMPLE... BUT CAN WE PUT ASIDE THE BOY-SCOUT ACT FOR A WHILE AND ADMIT...
...THAT YOU'RE JUST A COWARD?
I GOT YOU TO MALEKITH BEFORE CARNAGE HAD HIM AND YET YOU COULDN'T ACT...OUT OF SOME MISPLACED SENSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS... THE LIE THAT EVERY GOOD MAN TELLS HIMSELF.
ALL THE BLOOD THAT IS SPILLED FROM THIS MOMENT ON AND EVERY LIFE TORN FROM EXISTENCE...ALL OF IT IS ON YOUR HANDS. IT TICKLES ME TO NO END.

HALT! STRANGER...NONE MAY SET UPON THE HJORTSPRNG WITHOUT HELA'S FAVOR. NONE MAY TAKE TO THE WATER WITHOUT MY OAR.
FOR AGES LONG PAST COUNT, I HAVE KEPT THIS WAY. AND THE WAY SHALL YET BE KEPT.
WELL? JON? NOTHING TO SAY? YOUR SILENCE IS AMUSING. BUT I CAN STILL HEAR YOU THINKING.
LEAVE OR I WILL--

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY? THAT I WAS NAIVE?
THAT I WAS FOOLISH? THAT RIGHT AND WRONG ARE SILLY JUVENILE NOTIONS THAT SEEM MINUSCULE IN THE WAKE OF ALL THE THINGS I HAVE SEEN?
YOU WANT ME TO SAY YOU WERE RIGHT? IS THAT IT?
NO, JON... YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY IT...
...NOT OUT LOUD ANYWAY.

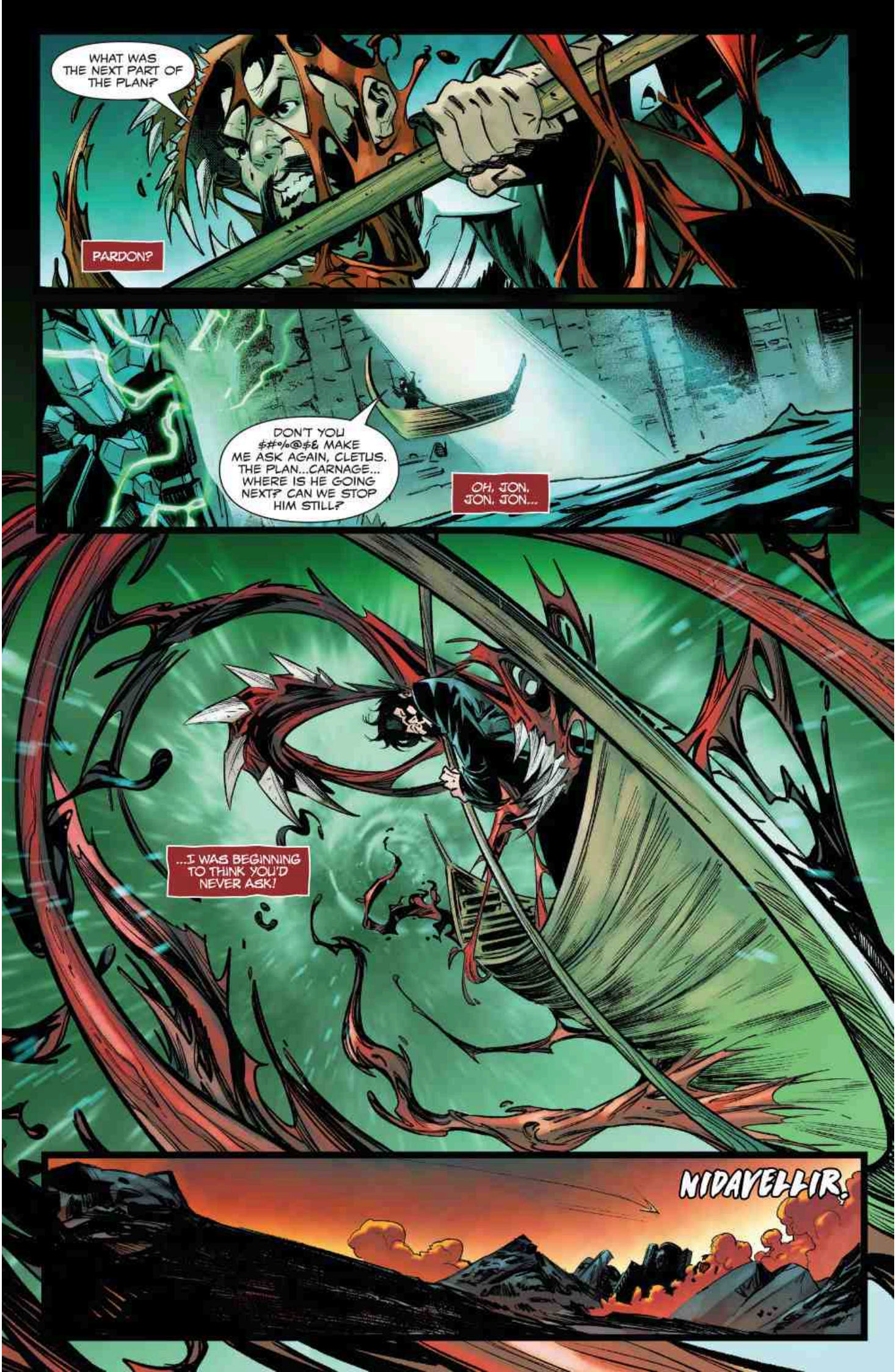
=SIGH=
...SO IT BEGINS, NEELY OF MIDGARD.

YOU DO REALIZE, DON'T YOU?
"YOUR COMPANION...I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE MEANS TO YOU. BUT HE IS ENTIRELY MAD.
"HE NEEDS TO BE STOPPED."
WE HAVE TO KILL HIM. BEFORE HE ENDS UP DESTROYING US ALL.

K-KILL HIM? Y-YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE CAN DO.
I'M N-NOT SURE HE EVEN CAN BE--
RIGHT...
BUT YOU'RE NOT OPPOSED TO THE IDEA, THEN...HMMM.
THERE WAS A TIME I WOULD'VE BEEN. THERE WAS A TIME I WAS A FAN.
BUT THIS ISN'T THE SAME CARNAGE I KNEW. SOMETHING'S CHANGED... THERE WAS ONCE A BEAUTY, AN INNOCENCE, NOW REPLACED ONLY BY A HUNGER FOR POWER. WHERE'S THE BEAUTY IN KILLING WHOLE WORLDS?
I WAS A FOOL TO HAVE PURSUED HIM, AND NOW I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN EVER BE FREE OF HIM.
YOU UNDERESTIMATE THE FORGE.
IT CREATES WEAPONS AND TOOLS CAPABLE OF DESTROYING AND BUILDING WHOLE REALITIES IN A MOMENT.
WHEN HE FASHIONS HIS BLADE, I IMAGINE IT WILL BE MELDED TO HIS BODY AS THE REST OF HIS WEAPONS ARE. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY.
A MOMENT OF WEAKNESS.
IF WE USE THE FORGE TO STRIKE AT THE HEART OF HIM, THE SHEER AMOUNT OF ENERGY FLOWING THROUGH SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO TURN HIM TO DUST.

BUT WHY?
WHY WOULD YOU RISK YOUR FREEDOM? YOUR LIFE?
SIGH I BUILT THIS... IN THE PRISON OVER THE LONG YEARS.
WHAT IS IT?
A TRAVELING DEVICE THAT WOULD LET ME ESCAPE FROM HERE. FROM THIS WORLD. I COULD TRAVEL TO OTHERS.
ALL I NEEDED WAS TO TAP INTO THE ENERGY FROM THE FORGE. I COULD DO IT NOW...IF I CHOSE TO.
BUT ALL THIS TIME I'VE SPENT WITHIN THOSE PRISON WALLS FOR WHAT I BELIEVED IN. THE FORGE NEEDS TO BE DESTROYED.
AND THEN YOU SHOWED UP ALONG WITH THAT... CARNAGE.
AND MY WORST FEARS STAND BEFORE ME. THE FORGE WILL BIRTH A WEAPON SO TERRIBLE THAT IT WILL DESTROY US ALL, NO MATTER HOW FAR WE RUN.
KLANG
THAT CANNOT BE THE LAST ACT OF DRORIN RUNEHEWER. I SUPPOSE...
KLANG

"...WE EACH HAVE OUR OWN UNDENIABLE OBSESSIONS."
ALL RIGHT, JON...YOU HAVE THE KEY. YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT.
THE WAY AHEAD IS OPEN. NOW ALL THAT REMAINS IS FOR US...
...TO GO HOME.


WHAT WAS THE NEXT PART OF THE PLAN?
PARDON?
DON'T YOU $#%@$& MAKE ME ASK AGAIN, CLETUS. THE PLAN...CARNAGE... WHERE IS HE GOING NEXT? CAN WE STOP HIM STILL?
OH, JON, JON, JON...
...I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU'D NEVER ASK!
NIDAVELLIR.

THE PREPARATIONS ARE NEARLY DONE AND I CAN BEGIN THE WORK SOON. BUT THERE ARE A FEW...UHH... OBSTACLES.
WE'RE GOING TO NEED MORE HANDS IN THE FORGE ONCE THE WORK BEGINS PROPER.
YOU LEAVE THAT TO ME, RUNEHEWER.
MY PUP, KENNETH AND I, WE'LL GET BY.
AND THEN THERE IS THE MATTER OF THE WEAPON. YOU HAVEN'T SAID WHAT KIND OF--
A SWORD. I WANT YOU TO MAKE ME A SWORD, DRORIN.
I CAN MAKE YOU A SWORD, BUT USUALLY THOSE WHO COME TO THIS FORGE HAVE SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC IN MIND.
USE THIS... IT CONTAINS A SYMBIOTE CODEX.
CODEX?
I PULLED IT FROM MALEKITH'S BEING. WITHIN IT LIES THE MEMORY OF A SWORD.
THE CODEX IS--IN THE RIGHT HANDS--A DESIGN... A TEMPLATE FOR THE GREATEST BLADE OF THEM ALL.

CARLOS PACHECO
1961-2022

"My friend Carlos Pacheco was a sweetheart of a guy who loved comics, the Marvel comics that he read as a child most of all. He brought an enthusiasm to his work that went beyond the drive of the professional — he was truly invested in the characters and their fictitious lives. His work combined the dynamics of John Byrne with the realism of Neal Adams, creating a synthesis that captured the essence of American super hero comics — a form that was exotic to Carlos as he first read the translated stories but which he absorbed and came to embody like a native. A citizen of Spain, the Marvel Universe was his true home."

— TOM BREVOORT

"Carlos was a dream collaborator who made every story better with his ideas, his brilliant storytelling and his beautiful art. But more, he was warmhearted, enthusiastic and a wonderful person. I was thrilled to work with him but happier still to have him as a friend. He will be enormously missed."

— KURT BUSIEK

"THEY CALL IT ALL-BLACK, THE NECROSWORD, THE BUTCHER'S BLADE.
"WHEN MALEKITH WIELDED THE WEAPON, HE TOOK ON THE VENOM SYMBIOTE TO DO SO. AND THE SYMBIOTE LEFT ITS CODEX BEHIND."*
*IN WAR OF THE REALMS, MIDGARDERS! --TOM
THE BLADE ITSELF POSSESSES POWER BEYOND KNOWING.
BUT BLACK IS SUCH AN UNIMAGINATIVE COLOR FOR A WEAPON OF SUCH EXQUISITE TASTES, DON'T YOU THINK, DRORIN?
I THINK WE'LL MAKE A FEW MODIFICATIONS.
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT: ISSUE #10

ON SALE IN FEBRUARY

CARNAGE RULES, AND THE CRIMSON-CLAD CREATURE CRAVES YOUR LETTERS! SEND YOUR NOTES TO **SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM.** BE SURE TO MARK THEM **"OKAY TO PRINT"!** –TOM

ZONE